

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: September 14, 1999

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS, (DOE/EIS-0246/SA-07)

to: Charles Craig – KEWN-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Pine Creek Ranch Acquisition, Project No. 98-022-00

Budget No: F5080

Wildlife Management Techniques of Actions Addressed Under this Supplement Analysis (See App A of the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS):

1.1 Fee-Title Acquisition and Transfer, 2.0 Plant Propagation Techniques (Transplanting, seeding, irrigation, & fertilization), 4. Water Development and Management Techniques (spring development, guzzlers), 6.0 Fire Management Techniques (prompt fire suppression and fuels management, natural fire management), 7.0 Vegetation Management: Enhancement and control (herbicides, mechanical removal, biological control, hand pulling, prescribed burn), 8.0 Species Management Techniques (introduction, reintroduction, or augmentation of wildlife populations, control of predators and nuisance animals), 9.0 Multiple Use Techniques (provision of educational and recreational opportunities, facility development, grazing), 10.0 Transportation/Access Techniques (land use restrictions, road maintenance, road decommissioning).

Location: Wheeler County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWSRO).

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA and CTWSRO are proposing to purchase 24,000 acres of wildlife and aquatic habitat in the John Day subbasin as partial mitigation for John Day Dam. The goal of the project is to "protect and enhance the Pine Creek watershed and its fish, wildlife, water, archaeological, geological, and educational resources through the acquisition and management of the 24,000 acre Pine Creek Ranch." The ranch encompasses approximately 80-90% of the Pine Creek watershed, and acquisition of it presents the opportunity to manage almost an entire watershed for fish and wildlife values.

The project would benefit a rich and diverse group of fish, wildlife, and plant species. Pine Creek watershed supplies habitats for at least 36 animal and plant species that are listed as sensitive, threatened or endangered. Pine Creek provides spawning and rearing habitat for one of the few remaining native steelhead populations in the lower John Day River basin. The property also provides important wintering habitat for deer and elk. Nine of the target wildlife species identified in conjunction with the John Day project are present at Pine Creek. There is the potential to reintroduce several native wildlife species.

Previous enhancement activities indicate that the watershed responds well to treatment. Passive restoration is proposed to be the direction used to manage this watershed. Since there is a wealth of baseline information on this project, some going back as far as 45 years, monitoring and evaluation should be easily accomplished.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by the CTWSRO and BPA and meets the standards and guidelines for the Wildlife Mitigation Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision. A comprehensive management plan would be prepared for the property after it is purchased. The plan would be prepared by the CTWSRO and would follow the guidelines and mitigation measures listed in the checklist.

Section 7 consultation would be conducted by BPA and the CTWSRO, as needed, prior to any activities that may affect species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The current activity, fee-title purchase of the property, would not affect listed species.

The CTWSRO is conducting an Archaeological and Historical Survey of the property in September 1999. Several known sites are present on the property and have been documented. A cultural resources management plan and a Programmatic Agreement will be completed by BPA, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the CTWSRO prior to any ground-disturbing activities taking place on the property.

In May, 1999, Fred Walasavage of BPA conducted a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) on the property. The objective of the ESA is to identify "recognized environmental conditions" in general accordance with the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard E1528-93. The report concluded that the Phase I survey did not reveal any environmental factors that would pose a significant liability for remedial action or cleanup under the Comprehensive Environmental Recovery, Compensation, and Liability Act.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Sections 7.6 A, B, and C, and 11.3 A and D of the Northwest Power Planning council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The attached Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Wildlife Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-2965) and ROD, and; 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Eric Powers
 Nancy H. Weintraub
 KECN Project Lead
 Environment, Fish and Wildlife Group

CONCUR: /s/ Thomas C. McKinney DATE: 9/14/99
 Thomas C. McKinney
 NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachments:
 NEPA Compliance Checklist
 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment